DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION

GREG GIANFORTE, GOVERNOR
1539 ELEVENTH AVENUE

STATE OF MONTANA

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE: (406) 444-2074
FAX: (406) 444-2684
PO BOX 201601
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-1601

DECISION MEMO
ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE

Phase I Water System Improvements
April 2022
North Valley County Water and Sewer District
Administrative
Section 32, Township 31 North, and Range 40 East; 48°24'11" 106°32'49" West
Valley County

PURPOSE AND NEED

St. Marie's original distribution system was installed in the late 1950's, and almost 38,606 feet of the original asbestos cement (AC) water main remains in use. Because of these mains, the District experiences the following issues:

- The District loses an average of 43% (10.1 million gallons) of the water they purchase from Dry Prairie Rural Water annually,
- Inoperable fire hydrants and meters, and
- Residents can be exposed to pathogens from low pressure events when water breaks occur.

Another challenge for the District is the lack of a mixer in the existing water tank. In the past, the District has had problems with the tank freezing and large chunks of ice forming. Ice chunks can scrape away the interior coating which exposes the steel to rust and corrosion. This also makes the water more susceptible to contamination. Also, the lack of a mixer increases the residence time of the chloramines in the water causing the residual to decrease. There have been a few times in the summer when the District has come close to not meeting the required chloramine concentrations.

The preferred alternative is to add a solar-powered mixer to the existing 400,000-gallon tank; to install new heads on the existing meters; and to replace the priority areas with same diameter PVC mains. Because of the size of the project, water main replacement will be completed over at least three phases due to funding limitations. Phase 1 is anticipated to:

- Install a new solar-powered mixer on the existing tank,
- Install new heads on the existing meters,
- Replace 3,800 lineal feet of AC main with PVC main,
- Install three new sampling stations to monitor chloramine concentrations, and
- Abandon and plug 17,902 lineal feet of dormant water main.

The proposed improvements to the distribution system will conserve treated surface water by eliminating the amount of treated water lost during breaks, develop a viable water system to help keep the community viable, preserve the State's natural heritage by preserving a rural agriculture community, and will incorporate sustainability by installing a solar-powered mixer at the tank in lieu of a mechanical mixer.

The proponent proposes to use DNRC Conservation and Resource Development Division - Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program funding to pay for engineering and administrative services

Explanation of the decision(s) that must be made regarding the proposed action (i.e. approve grant or loan and provide funding):

DNRC will approve the grant to provide funding for the North Valley County Water and Sewer District Phase I Water System Improvements Project.

DNRC is not required to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for actions that qualify for a CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION (ARM 36.17.614) or justified by a PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW; or are ACTIONS OF A SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523(5)); or are EMERGENCIES (ARM 36.2.539). These actions are subject to review for EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES that would require an EA or an EIS.

ACTIONS OF SPECIAL NATURE (ARM 36.2.523)

☒Administrative actions: routine, clerical or similar functions of a department, including but not limited to administrative procurement, contracts for consulting services, and personnel actions.

☐Minor repairs, operations, or maintenance of existing equipment or facilities.

☐Investigation and enforcement: data collection, inspection of facilities or enforcement of environmental standards.

☐Ministerial actions: actions in which the agency exercises no discretion, but rather acts upon a given state of facts in a prescribed manner.

☐Actions that are primarily social or economic in nature and that do not otherwise affect the human environment.

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION/PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW

☐Categorical Exclusion (CE) refers to a type of action which does not individually, collectively, or cumulatively require an EA or EIS, as determined by rulemaking or programmatic review adopted by the agency, unless extraordinary circumstances, as defined by rulemaking or programmatic review, occur. This project qualifies under ARM 36.17.614 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSIONS.

☐Programmatic review means an analysis (EIS or EA) of the impacts on the quality of the human environment of related actions, programs, or policies. DNRC – CARDD does not have any programmatic reviews completed at the time of this template.

The project listed above meets the definition of Actions of a Special Nature, Categorical Exclusion or Programmatic Review including specified conditions and Extraordinary Circumstances.

Prepared By:	**Name:**	Demi Blythe		
	Title:	CARDD MEPA/NEPA Coordinator	**Date:**	1/5/2022
	Email:	Demitra.Blythe@mt.gov		

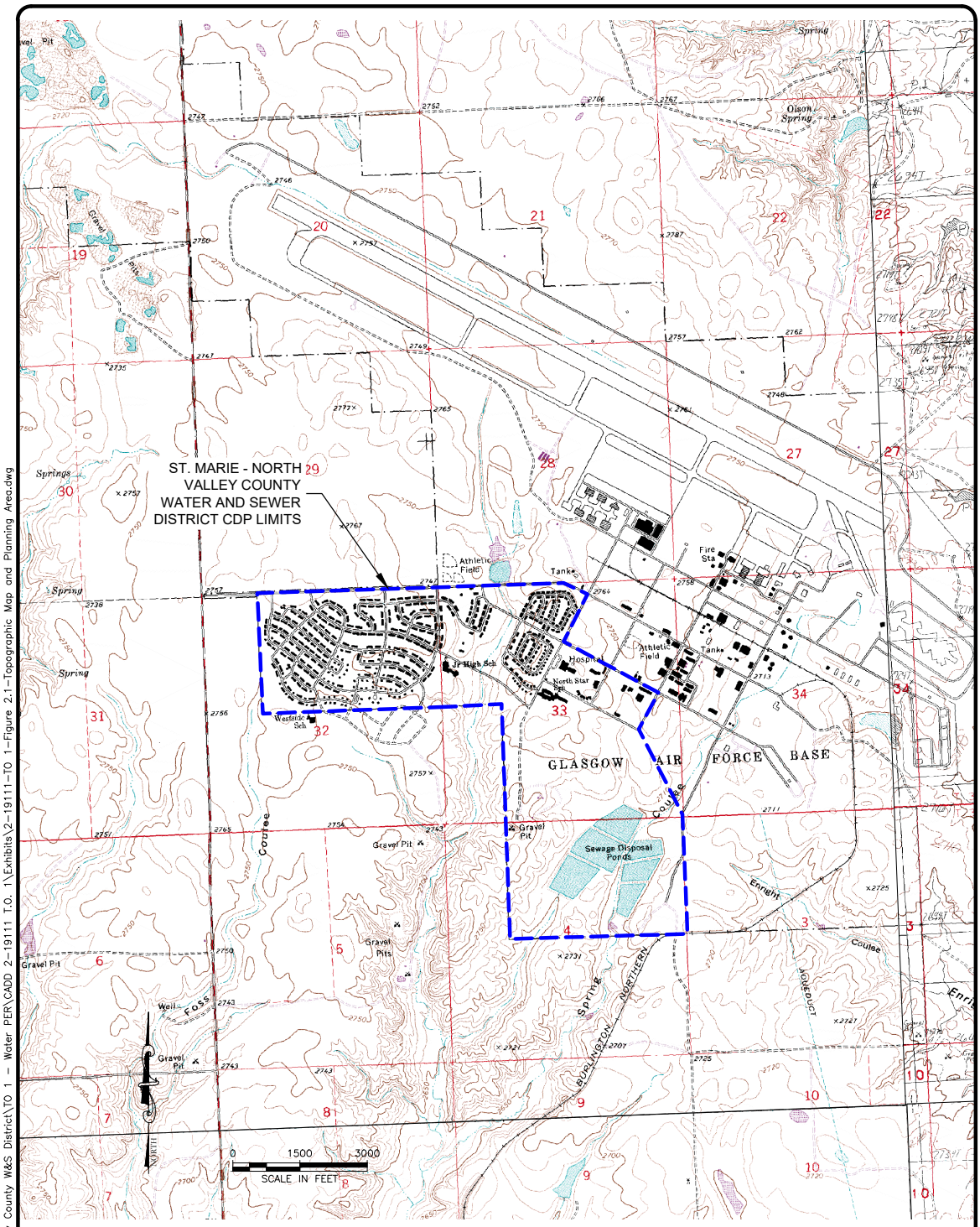
Approved By:	Name:	Mark Bostrom	
	Title:	CARD Division Administrator	
Signature: DocuSigned by: Mark W Bostrom BF7A1C50B2AF4DE...		**Date**: 1/5/2022 | 10:26:11 AM MST	

Figure 1.1
Preferred Alternative

ST. MARIE - NORTH VALLEY COUNTY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
2020 WATER PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT

GreatWest engineering®

J:\2-19111 - North Valley County W&S District\TO 1 - Water PER\CADD 2-19111 T.O. 1\Exhibits\2-19111-TO 1-Figure 1.1-Preferred Alternative.dwg



J:\2-19111 - North Valley County W&S District\TO 1 - Water PER\CADD 2-19111 T.O. 1\Exhibits\2-19111-TO 1-Figure 2.1-Topographic Map and Planning Area.dwg

GreatWest engineering®

Figure 2.1
Topographic Map and Planning Area

ST. MARIE - NORTH VALLEY COUNTY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
2020 WATER PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT

Environmental Checklist Instructions

Purpose of This Document:

All applicants must consider the potential environmental impacts of their projects. Consideration of these impacts on the location, design, or construction actions may help avoid expensive mitigation or construction costs. A project will not be eligible for funding if it results in significant adverse impact after mitigation.

DNRC requires compliance with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) per state law and associated DNRC Administrative Rules (ARM 36.2.523). MEPA requires state agencies to prepare a detailed statement on any project, program, or activity directly undertaken by the agency; a project or activity supported through a contract, grant, subsidy, loan or other form of funding assistance from the agency; and a project or activity involving the issuance of a lease, permit, license, certificate, or other entitlement for use or permission by the agency (MCA Title 75, Chapter 1). All project applications will be subject to MEPA review followed by a public scoping process. DNRC will post the drafted MEPA decision for public comment at a minimum of two weeks (dependent on level of environmental impact). The MEPA document will then require a final decision by DNRC once funds are awarded.

Please complete the Environmental Checklist below as the information provided will be subject to a MEPA assessment by DNRC. If an Environmental Assessment has already been completed for the proposed project, please attach it to the application in place of this evaluation.

Instructions:

Complete the Environmental Checklist on the following pages after the instructions below. DNRC retains the ultimate decision-making authority on all MEPA decisions. If DNRC determines this section to be incomplete, additional information will be required before consideration for funding.

Example		
Impact Code	**Impact Type**	**Explanation of Impact to Resource**
1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (example: soil lump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	*Current Conditions:* *Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:*

1. **Impact Code:** In the first column, identify the impact that the preferred alternative will have on each resource (e.g. 1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints) in the project area. Select from the following impact codes:
   - *No Impact*: No impact to the resource is anticipated or this is not applicable to this project.
   - *Beneficial*: Potentially beneficial impact to the resource.
   - *Adverse*: Potentially adverse impact to the resource.

   Please note that a resource may have more than one impact. Identify all possible impacts to the resource in the space provided. For example, the preferred alternative may have a short-term direct negative impact and a long-term direct and indirect positive impact on the resource. Check all boxes that apply and use the space provided in the final column "Explanation of Impact to Resource" to explain.

Example		
Impact Code	**Impact Type**	**Explanation of Impact to Resource**
1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (example: soil lump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	*Current Conditions:* *Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:*

2. **Impact Type:** In the second column, identify the type(s) of impact to the resource from the preferred alternative. (Impacts may be direct, indirect or cumulative).
   - *Direct impacts*: Occur at the same time and place as the proposed project.
   - *Indirect or secondary impacts*: Occur at a different location or later time than the proposed project.
   - *Cumulative impacts*: Collective impacts on the environment when considered in conjunction with other past, present, and future actions related to the proposed project. Cumulative impact analysis includes a review of all state and nonstate activities that have occurred, are occurring, or may occur that have impacted or may impact the same resource as the proposed project.

   Just as above, please note that a resource may have more than one impact. Identify all possible impacts to the resource in the space provided. For example, the preferred alternative may have a short-term direct negative impact and a long-term direct and indirect positive impact on the resource. Check all boxes that apply and use the space provided in the final column "Explanation of Impact to Resource" to explain.

Example		
Impact Code	**Impact Type**	**Explanation of Impact to Resource**
1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (example: soil lump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	*Current Conditions:* *Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:*

3. **Explanation of Impact to Resource:** In the final column, use the space provided on the Environmental Checklist to summarize the following information:
   - ***a. Current Conditions***
     - Describe the current environmental resources of the affected area including the impact of no action. Your description of the current natural resources will provide a baseline to compare all alternatives and their associated environmental impacts.
   - ***b. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:***
     - Describe the impact of the preferred alternative or ***indicate why there is no impact*** from the project.
     - Identify any reasonable cumulative impacts that may result from implementing the preferred alternative. Cumulative impacts are the collective impacts on the

environment when considered in conjunction with other past, present, and future actions related to the proposed project.

- If a potentially adverse impact is identified for the preferred alternative, the applicant must provide the following:
  - An analysis of the severity, duration, extent, and frequency of the impact. Please specify and describe the following:
    - Severity: negligible, minor, or major.
    - Duration: short-term or long-term.
    - Extent: local, regional, or statewide.
    - Frequency: non-recurring or recurring.
  - An explanation of short- and/or long-term measures to mitigate the impact with a discussion on the effects of those mitigative measures on the proposed project.
- Identify any required permits.

4. **Additional Information:** Underneath the table the following information must be provided:
   a. Cultural Survey Acknowledgement
   b. Sources of Information: Identify all sources consulted for the completion of the Environmental Checklist. Sources may include studies, plans, documents, or the persons, organizations, or agencies contacted for assistance.

Certain sections of this Environmental Checklist may require specialized knowledge. Please contact the necessary agencies if further specialized knowledge is needed and attach comments provided by those agencies to your application. Below are contacts for certain sections that may require additional review by other agencies:

- *Physical Environment,* ***Section #5*** **– Surface Water Quality** – Montana Department of Environmental Quality, (406) 444 - 3080.
- *Physical Environment,* ***Section #6*** **– Floodplains and Floodplain Management** – The Department of Natural Resources Water Resources Division, (406) 444 - 0860 or visit: http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/water/operations/floodplain-management.
- *Physical Environment,* ***Section #7*** **– Wetlands** – U.S. Department of the Army Corps of Engineers, (406) 441 - 1375 or montana.reg@usace.army.mil.
- *Physical Environment,* ***Section #9*** **– Vegetation and Wildlife Species and Habitats** – Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Wildlife Office (406) 444 - 2612 or find your Regional Office at https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/contact-us.
- *Physical Environment,* ***Section #10*** **– Unique, Endangered, Fragile or Limited Environmental Resources** – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for consultation on potential impacts to endangered or limited plants, fish, or other wildlife, (406) 449 - 5225.
- *Human Environment,* ***Section #4*** **– Historic Properties, Cultural or Archaeological Resources –** Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), (406) 444 – 7718 or pebrown@mt.gov.

For assistance in preparing the Environmental Checklist, contact DNRC grant manager listed on grant application.

Environmental Checklist

Applicant Name: North Valley County Water and Sewer District

Project Title: Water Main Rehabilitation Project

Environmental Checklist Prepared by: On: 6/29/2021

Greg Lukasik, PE — Name of Person 1
Great West Engineering — Organization
406-281-8587 — Phone Number
glukasik@greatwesteng.com — Email
Andrea Kenney — Name of Person 2
Great West Engineering — Organization
406-281-8577 — Phone Number
akenney@greatwesteng.com — Email

Click or tap here to enter text.

List additional people above. Include organization, phone number and email for all.

Physical Environment		
Impact Code	**Impact Type**	**Explanation of Impact to Resource**
1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (example: soil lump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: Information on the area soils was gathered from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey. According to the survey, 78.3% are classified as loam, 10.8% are classified as clay loam, 9.1% are sandy clay, and 1.8% are gravelly clay. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: All of these soils are not prime farmland. Any lands being disturbed for proposed improvements will be restored to original conditions upon completion of construction. Ultimately, the project will result in minimal change in land use and minimal adverse impacts to land resources. Great West Engineering, NRCS

2. Hazardous Facilities (example: power lines, hazardous waste sites, acceptable distance from explosive and flammable hazards including chemical/petrochemical storage tanks, underground fuel storage tanks, and related facilities such as natural gas storage facilities and propane storage tanks)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☒ Adverse	☐ Direct ☒ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The Montana Department of Environmental (MDEQ) site revealed 43 leaking underground storage tanks in St. Marie. All but 11 of these tanks have been resolved. The exact extents of the contamination are unknown. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: If petroleum contaminated soils are encountered during construction, the DEQ standards including ductile iron pipe with nitrile gaskets will be implemented. Provisions will be made to remove any contaminated soils encountered and replaced with imported backfill during construction. If encountered, the DEQ Petroleum Technical Section will be notified for testing and determination of disposal. Great West Engineering, MDEQ
3. Surrounding Air Quality (example: dust, odors, emissions)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☒ Adverse	☒ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There may be some temporary dust associated with the construction. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: Dust will be controlled, and best management practices will be followed during construction to minimize temporary impacts as part of the construction contract.
4. Groundwater Resources and Aquifers (example: quantity, quality, distribution, depth to groundwater, sole source aquifers)		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The improvements will enable the District to conserve and manage the quantity of groundwater it uses as it will reduce the treated water lost to water main leaks. Great West Engineering, GWIC Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The District is expected to conserve approximately 10.1 million gallons per year by replacing the leaking mains. Well logs from the Groundwater Information Center (GWIC) showed the average static water level at 72.30 feet. There are no sole source aquifers near St. Marie. The Missoula Valley Sole Source Aquifer is located 350 miles southwest of St. Marie.

5. Surface Water/Water Quality, Quantity and Distribution (example: streams, lakes, storm runoff, irrigation systems, canals)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: Fort Peck Reservoir is the largest surface water located 27 miles south of St. Marie while the Milk River is located 17 miles south of St. Marie. Porcupine Creek lies 3.3 miles east of St. Marie and Cherry Creek lies 2.65 miles west of St. Marie. The proposed project will not affect surface waters. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The proposed project will not affect surface water.
6. Floodplains and Floodplain Management (Identify any floodplains within one mile of the boundary of the project.)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: Currently, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain map has not been completed for St. Marie. The closest map for St. Marie is located 2.4 miles east of St. Marie. Though this map only maps east of Porcupine Creek and does not include the St. Marie CDP. The Valley County Floodplain Administrator had no comments on the project. Great West Engineering, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Valley County Floodplain Administrator Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The closest map for St. Marie is located 2.4 miles east of St. Marie. Though this map only maps east of Porcupine Creek and does not include the St. Marie CDP. The Valley County Floodplain Administrator had no comments on the project.
7. Wetlands (Identify any wetlands within one mile of the boundary of the project and state potential impacts.)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Nation Wetlands Inventory (NWI) was used to identify wetlands within and surrounding St. Marie. Great West Engineering, NWI Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: There are several “Freshwater Emergent Wetlands” surrounding the community. No wetlands will be affected by this water main replacement project.

8. Agricultural Lands, Production, and Farmland Protection (example: grazing, forestry, cropland, prime or unique agricultural lands) Identify any prime or important farm ground or forest lands within one mile of the boundary of the project.		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: As stated above, the NRCS web soil survey was used to identify if the soils in and surrounding St. Marie are prime farmland. None of the soils are considered prime farmland. Great West Engineering, NRCS Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
9. Vegetation and Wildlife Species and Habitats, Including Fish (example: terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats)		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☒ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed improvements should not impact vegetation or wildlife species or habitats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks; and Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation were contacted regarding the project. Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation revealed the District will have to pay $139.62 to the Stewardship Account since the project is located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse. Great West Engineering, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Sage Crouse Habitat Conservation Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation revealed the District will have to pay $139.62 to the Stewardship Account since the project is located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse.

10. Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources, Including Endangered Species (example: plants, fish or wildlife)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The Natural Heritage Program was utilized to search plant and animal species of concern within the project area. No plant species of concern were identified within the project area (Township 31 N and Range 40E). Nine species of concern, one mammal species, seven bird species, and one fish species were identified in the project area. Great West Engineering, Natural Heritage Program, Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The Little Brown Myotis, Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Greater Sage Grouse, Baird's Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Long-billed Curlew, McCown's Longspur, and Northern Redbelly Dace are the animal species of concern. Proposed improvements will not impact these species. As stated above, the proposed improvements are located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse. Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation stated the District can pay a $139.62 contribution to the Stewardship Account as part of their mitigation plan.
11. Unique Natural Features (example: geologic features)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no known unique natural features anticipated to be impacted as a result of the proposed project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. SHPO
12. Access to, and Quality of, Recreational and Wilderness Activities, Public Lands and Waterways, and Public Open Space		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the access or quality of recreational and wilderness activities, public lands and waterways, or public open spaces as a result of the proposed project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The project is not located near a designated wild and scenic river and the National Park Service (NPS) stated they had no concerns with the project. All work will be within existing disturbed areas within District right-of-way.
Human Environment		
Impact Code	**Impact Type**	**Resource**

1. Visual Quality – Coherence, Diversity, Compatibility of Use and Scale, Aesthetics		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed improvements will not impact visual quality. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:
2. Nuisances (example: glare, fumes)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☒ Adverse	☐ Direct ☒ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: Short term nuisances such as noise and exhaust fumes may occur during construction. Efforts will be made to minimize these nuisances and address certain problems at they occur. No permanent adverse impacts are anticipated. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: Efforts will be made to minimize these nuisances and address certain problems at they occur through the construction contract. No permanent adverse impacts are anticipated.
3. Noise – Suitable Separation Between Housing and Other Noise Sensitive Activities and Major Noise Sources (example: aircraft, highways and railroads.)		
☐ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☒ Adverse	☒ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There may be some temporary noise during construction of the proposed project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: Construction operation hours will be limited to 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. No other long-term impacts to noise are anticipated upon completion of the project.
4. Historic Properties, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources***(Please see end of Environmental Checklist for details if Cultural Survey has not been performed per SHPO Section 106)*		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Fort Peck Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: SHPO stated, “according to our records there have been no previously recorded sites within the designated search locals.” The Fort Peck THPO stated, “no adverse Effect on Historic or Cultural Properties significant to the Fort Peck Tribes.” SHPO, Fort Peck THPO
5. Changes in Demographic (Population) Characteristics (example: quantity, distribution, density)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: No changes to area demographics are expected from this project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:

6. General Housing Conditions – Quality, Quantity, Affordability		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact general housing conditions. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:
7. Businesses or Residents (example: loss of, displacement, or relocation)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will not require displacement or relocation of businesses and/or residents. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:
8. Public Health and Safety		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☒ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The existing facilities present several health and safety threats, such as leaking water mains, documented in the PER. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: This project will greatly reduce the risks to health and safety.
9. Local Employment – Quantity or Distribution of Employment, Economic Impact		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☒ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: Saint Marie is a mostly residential community. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: An updated water system will make St. Marie a more desirable location for businesses. The proposed project will result in direct capital expenditures in the local economy. During construction, work crews would strengthen the Contractor's workforce, the Contractor may look to hire local help for various construction positions. The induced impacts would have a positive impact on the local economy of St. Marie. Great West Engineering
10. Income Patterns – Economic Impact		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☒ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: No impacts to income are anticipated with the project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative:
11. Local and State Tax Base and Revenues		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the local and state tax base and revenues directly attributed as a result of the proposed project.

		Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
12. Community and Government Services and Facilities (example: educational facilities; health and medical services and facilities; police; emergency medical services; and parks, playgrounds and open space)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The proposed project will not impact schools, health care and medical services. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
13. Commercial and Industrial Facilities – Production and Activity, Growth or Decline		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will not impact commercial and industrial facilities. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
14. Social Structures and Mores (example: standards of social conduct/social conventions)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact social structures. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
15. Land Use Compatibility (example: growth, land use change, development activity, adjacent land uses and potential conflicts)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: All improvements will be completed within existing right-of-way areas and will not require a change in land use. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
16. Energy Resources – Consumption and Conservation		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The District does not have a mixer in the water tower. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: Installing a solar-powered mixer will conserve energy resources by utilizing renewable energy.
17. Solid Waste Management		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to solid waste management as a result of the proposed project. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .

18. Wastewater Treatment – Sewage System		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the wastewater treatment system as a result of the proposed project. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
19. Storm Water – Surface Drainage		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to storm water as a result of the proposed project. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
20. Community Water Supply		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☒ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The system issues, documented in the P.E.R., result in high water loss and other issues. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The proposed improvements will improve the District's water supply. The replacement of the leaking AC mains will reduce the amount of water lost from water main breaks, will increase fire protection, and will increase fire flow for the whole system. The proposed project will bring the water system into compliance with current state and federal regulations.
21. Fire Protection – Hazards		
☐ No Impact ☒ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The existing water system does not provide adequate fire flow to the entire community. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: The proposed project will help increase fire flow for the whole system. Additionally, the number of fire hydrants will be increased so it will be easier for the fire department to connect multiple trucks to the system to fight fires quickly.
22. Cultural Facilities, Cultural Uniqueness and Diversity		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: *Comments and Source of Information*: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project.

		Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: SHPO stated, "according to our records there have been no previously recorded sites within the designated search locals." The Fort Peck THPO stated, "no adverse Effect on Historic or Cultural Properties significant to the Fort Peck Tribes." SHPO, Fort Peck THPO
23. Transportation Networks and Traffic Flow Conflicts (example: rail; auto including local traffic; airport runway clear zones – avoidance of incompatible land use in airport runway clear zones)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: There are no anticipated long-term impacts to transportation as a result of the proposed project. Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: There may be temporary traffic disturbances during construction that will be mitigated using traffic control. An environmental letter was sent to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) but no response was received. The proposed project shouldn't affect airport runway clear zones. The proposed project will not be located on state owned highways, so no MDT permit is required. Great West Engineering, FAA
24. Consistency with Local Ordinances, Resolutions, or Plans (example: conformance with local comprehensive plans, zoning, or capital improvement plans.)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: All local, state, and federal rules and regulations will be complied with during the project. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .
25. Private Property Rights (example: a regulatory action or project activity that reduces, minimizes, or eliminates the use of private property.)		
☒ No Impact ☐ Beneficial ☐ Adverse	☐ Direct ☐ Indirect ☐ Cumulative	Current Conditions: The project will not result in regulatory action on private property rights. Great West Engineering Preferred Alternative Environmental Narrative: .

Additional Information

****If no cultural survey has been performed, or is not expected to be needed, applicant must agree to the following statement:**

☒ I hereby agree that, to my knowledge, there are no cultural or paleontological materials in the proposed project site. If previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, the DNRC grant manager will be notified, and all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

List all sources of information used to complete the Environmental Checklist. Sources may include studies, plans, documents, or the individuals, organizations, or agencies contacted for assistance. For individuals, groups, or agencies, please include a contact person and phone number. List any scoping

documents or meetings and/or public meetings during project development.

2020 North Valley County Water System Preliminary Engineering Report

Below is a list of electronic resources available for data gathering to aid in the development of the Environmental Checklist:

Abandoned Mines (DEQ): https://deq.mt.gov/Land/abandonedmines/bluebook

Agricultural Statistics (USDA): USDA - National Agricultural Statistics Service - Data and Statistics

Air Quality

- Nonattainment Areas: http://deq.mt.gov/Air/airquality/planning/airnonattainmentstatus
- Citizens' Guide: http://deq.mt.gov/Air/airmonitoring/citguide

Army Corps of Engineers: http://www.usace.army.mil/Home.aspx

Bureau of Business and Economic Research, UM: http://www.bber.umt.edu/

Cadastral (for property ownership info): http://svc.mt.gov/msl/mtcadastral

Census Information, MT Dept. of Commerce: http://ceic.mt.gov

Conservation Districts, MT: http://macdnet.org/

Cultural Records

- Montana Historical Society: http://mhs.mt.gov/shpo/culturalrecords.asp

DEQ data search tools: Montana DEQ's GIS Portal (mt.gov)

- Including Clean Water Act Info Center, Hazardous Waste Handlers, Petroleum Release Fund Claims, Unpermitted Releases, Underground Storage Tanks, Source Water Protection

EPA Enforcement and Compliance History Online http://echo.epa.gov/

Farmland Classification: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/WebSoilSurvey.aspx

Fish (Also See Wildlife)

- Montana Fisheries Information System: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks GIS Data (arcgis.com)
- Aquatic Invasive Species: Montana FWP AIS Surveys Dashboard 2021 (arcgis.com)

Floodplain Maps, FEMA: https://msc.fema.gov/portal

Geographic Information, Natural Resources Information System: http://nris.mt.gov/gis

Geologic Information - MBMG - Publications - Download Geologic Maps (mtech.edu)

Maps of Montana for species observations, land cover, wetland and riparian areas, land management: Montana Natural Heritage Program (mtnhp.org); http://mtnhp.org/mapviewer/?t=6

Montana Department of Transportation Environmental Manual: http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/docs/manuals/env/preface.pdf

Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Information System: http://bogc.dnrc.mt.gov/webApps/DataMiner/

Plants

- Plant database, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service: http://plants.usda.gov/java
- Plant Species, MT Field Guide: http://fieldguide.mt.gov/default.aspx
- Plant Species of Concern: http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/Default.aspx?AorP=p
- Threatened and endangered plants, USDA: http://plants.usda.gov/threat.html

Soils

- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service database: https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/
- Montana soil and water conservation districts: http://swcdmi.org/

State Historic Preservation Office: http://mhs.mt.gov/Shpo

Tourism, UM – Institute of Tourism & Recreation Research: http://www.itrr.umt.edu

Tribal Resources:

- Blackfeet Tribal Environmental Permits: http://www.blackfeetenvironmental.com
- CSKT Natural Resources Department: http://nrd.csktribes.org/
- Montana Office of Indian Affairs: http://tribalnations.mt.gov/
- Tribal Historic Preservation Officer List Search - NATHPO

Vehicle Traffic Count (MDT): http://www.mdt.mt.gov/publications/datastats/traffic.shtml

Water

- Stream Record Extension Facilitator, USGS: USGS | National Water Dashboard
- Streamstats basin characteristics, USGS: http://water.usgs.gov/osw/streamstats/
- Water Resources Division, DNRC: http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/water ; ArcGIS Web Application (mt.gov)
- Water Rights Bureau, DNRC: http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/water/water-rights
- Water Right Query System, DNRC: DNRC Water Right Query System (mt.gov)
- Wetlands database, USFWS: http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/mapper.html

Wild and Scenic Rivers: http://www.rivers.gov/montana.php

Wildlife

- Animal Species, MT Field Guide: http://fieldguide.mt.gov/default.aspx
- Animal Species of Concern: http://mtnhp.org/SpeciesOfConcern/Default.aspx?AorP=a

- Aquatic Invasive Species: Montana FWP AIS Surveys Dashboard 2021 (arcgis.com)
- Critical Habitat Mapper, USFWS: http://ecos.fws.gov/crithab/
- Crucial Areas Planning System/Habitat Assessment Tool: Habitat MT (HB 526) Funded Lands (arcgis.com)
- FWP Contact Map: http://fwp.mt.gov/gis/maps/contactUs/ (includes biologist responsibility areas)
- Maps and GIS Data, FWP: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks GIS Data (arcgis.com)
- Sage grouse management, FWP: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks GIS Data : Sage-grouse Habitat/Current Distribution (Montana) : Sage-grouse Habitat/Current Distribution (Montana) (arcgis.com)
- Sage grouse habitat conservation program, DNRC: http://sagegrouse.mt.gov/
- Sage grouse habitat map: https://sagegrouse.mt.gov/ProgramMap

UNIFORM ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

As the engineer that prepared the preliminary engineering report, I Greg Lukasik, PE,
(print name of engineer)
have reviewed the information presented in this checklist and believe that it accurately identifies the environmental resources in the area and the potential impacts that the project could have on those resources. In addition, the required state and federal agencies were provided with the required information about the project and requested to provide comments on the proposed public facility project. Their comments have been incorporated into and attached to the Preliminary Engineering Report.

Engineer's Signature:_____
Date:_____

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT	
Key **N**	**1. Soil Suitability, Topographic and/or Geologic Constraints (e.g., soil slump, steep slopes, subsidence, seismic activity)** *Comments and Source of Information*: Information on the area soils was gathered from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey. According to the survey, 78.3% are classified as loam, 10.8% are classified as clay loam, 9.1% are sandy clay, and 1.8% are gravelly clay. All of these sols are not prime farmland. Any lands being disturbed for proposed improvements will be restored to original conditions upon completion of construction. Ultimately, the project will result in minimal change in land use and minimal adverse impacts to land resources -**Great West Engineering** **-NRCS**
Key **M**	**2. Hazardous Facilities (e.g., power lines, EPA hazardous waste sites, acceptable distance from explosive and flammable hazards including chemical/petrochemical storage tanks, underground fuel storage tanks, and related facilities such as natural gas storage facilities & propane storage tanks)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The Montana Department of Environmental (MDEQ) site revealed 43 leaking underground storage tanks in St. Marie. All but 11 of these tanks have been resolved. The exact extents of the contamination are unknown. If petroleum contaminated soils are encountered during construction, the DEQ standards including ductile iron pipe with nitrile gaskets will be implemented. Provisions will be made to remove any contaminated soils encountered and replaced with imported backfill during construction. If encountered, the DEQ Petroleum Technical Section will be notified for testing and determination of disposal. **-Great West Engineering** **-MDEQ**
Key **M**	**3. Effects of Project on Surrounding Air Quality or Any Kind of Effects of Existing Air Quality on Project (e.g., dust, odors, emissions)**

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

	Comments and Source of Information: There may be some temporary dust associated with the construction. Dust will be controlled, and best management practices will be followed during construction to minimize temporary impacts. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **B**	**4. Groundwater Resources & Aquifers (e.g., quantity, quality, distribution, depth to groundwater, sole source aquifers)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The improvements will enable the District to conserve and manage the quantity of groundwater it uses as it will reduce the treated water lost to water main leaks. The District is expected to conserve approximately 10.1 million gallons per year by replacing the leaking mains. Well logs from the Groundwater Information Center (GWIC) showed the average static water level at 72.30 feet. There are no sole source aquifers near St. Marie. The Missoula Valley Sole Source Aquifer is located 350 miles southwest of St. Marie. **-Great West Engineering** **-GWIC** **-EPA Sole Source Aquifer Map**
Key **N**	**5. Surface Water/Water Quality, Quantity & Distribution (e.g., streams, lakes, storm runoff, irrigation systems, canals)** *Comments and Source of Information*: Fort Peck Reservoir is the largest surface water located 27 miles south of St. Marie while the Milk River is located 17 miles south of St. Marie. Porcupine Creek lies 3.3 miles east of St. Marie and Cherry Creek lies 2.65 miles west of St. Marie. The proposed project will not affect surface waters. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**6. Floodplains & Floodplain Management (Identify any floodplains within one mile of the boundary of the project.)** *Comments and Source of Information*: Currently, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain map has not been completed for St. Marie. The closest map for St. Marie is located 2.4 miles east of St. Marie. Though this map only maps east of Porcupine Creek and does not include the St. Marie CDP. The Valley County Floodplain Administrator had no comments on the project. **-Great West Engineering** **-Federal Emergency Management Agency** **-Valley County Floodplain Administrator**
Key **N**	**7. Wetlands Protection (Identify any wetlands within one mile of the boundary of the project.)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Nation Wetlands Inventory (NWI) was used to identify wetlands within and surrounding St. Marie. There are several “Freshwater Emergent Wetlands” surrounding the community. **-Great West Engineering** **-NWI**

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

Key	
N	**8. Agricultural Lands, Production, & Farmland Protection (e.g., grazing, forestry, cropland, prime or unique agricultural lands) (Identify any prime or important farm ground or forest lands within one mile of the boundary of the project.)** *Comments and Source of Information*: As stated above, the NRCS web soil survey was used to identify if the soils in and surrounding St. Marie are prime farmland. None of the soils are considered prime farmland. **-Great West Engineering** **-NRCS**
M	**9. Vegetation & Wildlife Species & Habitats, Including Fish (e.g., terrestrial, avian and aquatic life and habitats)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed improvements should not impact vegetation or wildlife species or habitats. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks; and Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation were contacted regarding the project. Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation revealed the District will have to pay $139.62 to the Stewardship Account since the project is located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse. **-Great West Engineering** **-U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** **-Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks** **-Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation**
M	**10. Unique, Endangered, Fragile, or Limited Environmental Resources, Including Endangered Species (e.g., plants, fish, sage grouse, or other wildlife)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The Natural Heritage Program was utilized to search plant and animal species of concern within the project area. No plant species of concern were identified within the project area (Township 31 N and Range 40E). Nine species of concern, one mammal species, seven bird species, and one fish species were identified in the project area. The Little Brown Myotis, Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Greater Sage Grouse, Baird's Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Long-billed Curlew, McCown's Longspur, and Northern Redbelly Dace are the animal species of concern. Proposed improvements will not impact these species. As stated above, the proposed improvements are located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse. Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation stated the District can pay a $139.62 contribution to the Stewardship Account as part of their mitigation plan. **-Great West Engineering** **-Natural Heritage Program** **-Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation**
Key	**11. Unique Natural Features (e.g., geologic features)**

N	*Comments and Source of Information*: There are no known unique natural features anticipated to be impacted as a result of the proposed project. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. **-SHPO**
Key **N**	**12. Access to, and Quality of, Recreational & Wilderness Activities, Public Lands and Waterways (including Federally Designated Wild & Scenic Rivers), and Public Open Space** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the access or quality of recreational and wilderness activities, public lands and waterways, or public open spaces as a result of the proposed project. The project is not located near a designated wild and scenic river and the National Park Service (NPS) stated they had no concerns with the project. All work will be within existing disturbed areas within District right-of-way. **-Great West Engineering** **-NPS**
HUMAN POPULATION	
Key **N**	**1. Visual Quality – Coherence, Diversity, Compatibility of Use and Scale, Aesthetics** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed improvements will not impact visual quality. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **M**	**2. Nuisances (e.g., glare, fumes)** *Comments and Source of Information*: Short term nuisances such as noise and exhaust fumes may occur during construction. Efforts will be made to minimize these nuisances and address certain problems at they occur. No permanent adverse impacts are anticipated. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **M**	**3. Noise - suitable separation between noise sensitive activities (such as residential areas) and major noise sources (aircraft, highways & railroads)** *Comments and Source of Information*: There may be some temporary noise during construction of the proposed project. However, construction operation hours will be limited to 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. No other long-term impacts to noise are anticipated upon completion of the project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**4. Historic Properties, Cultural, and Archaeological Resources** *Comments and Source of Information*: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Fort Peck Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. SHPO stated, “according to our records there have been no previously recorded sites within the designated search locals.” The Fort Peck THPO stated, “no adverse Effect on Historic or Cultural Properties significant to the Fort Peck Tribes.” **-SHPO** **-Fort Peck THPO**

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

Key	
B	**5. Changes in Demographic (population) Characteristics (e.g., quantity, distribution, density)** *Comments and Source of Information*: Improvements to the existing water system will make the community a more desirable place to live. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**6. Environmental Justice – (Does the project avoid placing lower income households in areas where environmental degradation has occurred, such as adjacent to brownfield sites?)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The project will not force low income households into an environmentally degraded area. The proposed project will proportionally benefit all households in the community. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**7. General Housing Conditions - Quality, Quantity, Affordability** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact general housing conditions. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**8. Displacement or Relocation of Businesses or Residents** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will not require displacement or relocation of businesses and/or residents. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **B**	**9. Public Health and Safety** *Comments and Source of Information*: The existing facilities present several health and safety threats, which the proposed project will eliminate. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **M**	**10. Lead Based Paint and/or Asbestos** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to involve handing of any lead-based paint. Asbestos Cement (AC) water main will be abandoned in place in order to mitigate potential impacts of contact with humans. If more than three feet of AC pipe is removed, the Montana Department of Environmental (MDEQ) asbestos mitigation procedures will be followed for removal and disposal. **-Great West Engineering** **-MDEQ**
Key **B**	**11. Local Employment & Income Patterns - Quantity and Distribution of Employment, Economic Impact**

	Comments and Source of Information: An updated water system will make St. Marie a more desirable location for businesses. The proposed project will result in direct capital expenditures in the local economy. During construction, work crews would strengthen the Contractor's workforce, the Contractor may look to hire local help for various construction positions. The induced impacts would have a positive impact on the local economy of St. Marie. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**12. Local & State Tax Base & Revenues** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the local and state tax base and revenues directly attributed as a result of the proposed project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**13. Educational Facilities - Schools, Colleges, Universities** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will not impact schools. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**14. Commercial and Industrial Facilities - Production & Activity, Growth or Decline** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will not impact commercial and industrial facilities. **-Great West Engineering**

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

Key **N**	**15. Health Care – Medical Services** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact health care and medical services. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**16. Social Services – Governmental Services (e.g., demand on)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact social services. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**17. Social Structures & Mores (Standards of Social Conduct/Social Conventions)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact social structures. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**18. Land Use Compatibility (e.g., growth, land use change, development activity, adjacent land uses and potential conflicts)** *Comments and Source of Information*: All improvements will be completed within existing right-of-way areas and will not require a change in land use. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **B**	**19. Energy Resources - Consumption and Conservation** *Comments and Source of Information*: Installing a solar-powered mixer will conserve energy resources by utilizing renewable energy. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**20. Solid Waste Management** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to solid waste management as a result of the proposed project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**21. Wastewater Treatment - Sewage System** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to the wastewater treatment system as a result of the proposed project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key	**22. Storm Water – Surface Drainage**

N	*Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to storm water as a result of the proposed project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **B**	**23. Community Water Supply** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed improvements will improve the District's water supply. The replacement of the leaking AC mains will reduce the amount of water lost from water main breaks, will increase fire protection, and will increase fire flow for the whole system. The proposed project will bring the water system into compliance with current state and federal regulations. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**24. Public Safety – Police** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated impacts to police as a result of the proposed project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **B**	**25. Fire Protection – Hazards** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project will help increase fire flow for the whole system. Additionally, the number of fire hydrants will be increased so it will be easier for the fire department to connect multiple trucks to the system to fight fires quickly. **-Great West Engineering**

Key Letter: N – No Impact **B –** Potentially Beneficial **A –** Potentially Adverse
P – Approval/Permits Required **M –** Mitigation Required

Key **N**	**26. Emergency Medical Services** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact emergency medical services. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**27. Parks, Playgrounds, & Open Space** *Comments and Source of Information*: The proposed project is not anticipated to impact parks, playgrounds, and open space. **-Great West Engineering**
Key **N**	**28. Cultural Facilities, Cultural Uniqueness & Diversity** *Comments and Source of Information*: The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) were contacted and asked to comment on the proposed project. SHPO stated, "according to our records there have been no previously recorded sites within the designated search locals." The Fort Peck THPO stated, "no adverse Effect on Historic or Cultural Properties significant to the Fort Peck Tribes." **-SHPO** **-Fort Peck THPO**
Key **N**	**29. Transportation Networks and Traffic Flow Conflicts (e.g., rail; auto including local traffic; airport runway clear zones - avoidance of incompatible land use in airport runway clear zones)** *Comments and Source of Information*: There are no anticipated long-term impacts to transportation as a result of the proposed project. There may be temporary traffic disturbances during construction that will be mitigated using traffic control. An environmental letter was sent to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) but no response was received. The proposed project shouldn't affect airport runway clear zones. The proposed project will not be located on state owned highways, so no MDT permit is required. **-Great West Engineering** **-FAA**
Key **N**	**30. Consistency with Local Ordinances, Resolutions, or Plans (e.g., conformance with local comprehensive plans, zoning, or capital improvement plans)** *Comments and Source of Information*: All local, state, and federal rules and regulations will be complied with during the project. **-Great West Engineering**
Key	**31. Is There a Regulatory Action on Private Property Rights as a Result of this Project?**

N	**(consider options that reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.)** *Comments and Source of Information*: The project will not result in regulatory action on private property rights. **-Great West Engineering**

ST. MARIE – NORTH VALLEY COUNTY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I. PROJECT CONTACT PERSON

Name:	Nick Chiechi, District President
Address:	521 6th Street
	St. Marie, MT 59231
Telephone:	(406) 524-3374

II. PROPOSED ACTION

The greatest challenge the District faces is the physical condition of their distribution system. Approximately 59.9% of the District's water system is still comprised of asbestos cement (AC) pipe over 60 years old. These pipes have experienced an extreme level of deterioration over the course of their life causing an excessive number of leaks. Because of these mains, the District experiences the following issues:

- The District loses an average of 43% (10.1 million gallons) of the water they purchase from Dry Prairie Rural Water annually,
- Inoperable fire hydrants need to be replaced in order to meet the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Circular 1 and the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) code regulations,
- Inoperable water meters, and
- Residents can be exposed to pathogens from low pressure events when water breaks occur.

Another challenge for the District is the lack of a mixer in the existing 400,000-gallon water storage tank. In the past, the District has had problems with the tank freezing and large chunks of ice forming. Ice chunks can scrape away the interior coating which exposes the steel to rust and corrosion. This also makes the water more susceptible to contamination. Also, the lack of a mixer increases the residence time of the chloramines in the water causing the residual to decrease. There have been a few times in the summer when the District has come close to not meeting the required chloramine concentrations. The addition of a mixer will reduce this problem.

The proposed water system improvements include the replacement of approximately 15,770 lineal feet of deteriorated AC water mains with 6-inch, 8-inch, or 10-inch PVC water mains. Additionally, new gate valves and fire hydrants will be installed to meet DEQ and NFPA standards. Also, a new solar-powered mixer will be installed at the existing 400,000-gallon water storage tank and new heads will be installed on the existing water meters.

III. ALTERNATIVES

As part of the March 2020 Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) prepared by Great West Engineering, Inc., many different alternatives were investigated for the distribution system improvements.

An extensive cost comparison and ranking were completed for the alternatives as part of the 2020 PER. The cost comparison was completed using a present worth analysis. The alternatives were then scored and ranked based on a weighted decision matrix. The categories the alternatives were scored on were as follows: life cycle costs, operation and maintenance, permitting issues, social impacts, environmental impacts, sustainability, land acquisition, and public health and safety. Please refer to chapter 5 and 6 of the 2020 PER for more detailed information regarding the cost comparisons and decision matrix. After ranking and scoring different characteristics of each alternative, the following alternatives were selected as the preferred alternatives:

- Alternative R-3: Adding a Solar-Powered Mixer to Existing 400,000-Gallon Tank,
- Alternative M-2: Installing New Heads on Existing Meters, and
- Alternative D-2: Replacing Priority Areas with Same Diameter PVC Mains and Adding Main Loop.

It is likely the District will not be able to address all of the improvements in a single phase due to the size of the project, costs, and the resulting financial burdens it would have on the rate payers. Therefore, the District will complete the improvements in phases. Phase 1 is anticipated to:

- Install a new solar-powered mixer on the existing tank,
- Install new heads on the existing meters,
- Replace the 6-inch AC main on Elm Street from Country Club Boulevard to Ash Street with 8-inch PVC, and replace the 10-inch AC main on 5th Street from Ash Street to the tank with 10-inch PVC,
- Install three new sampling stations throughout the distribution system to monitor chloramines, and
- Abandon and plug 17,902 lineal feet of dormant water main.

IV. MITIGATION

The potential environmental impacts as a result of the project include the AC mains, sage grouse mitigation, dust, and noise. The most notable negative concerns are the issues of air and noise pollution. Dust and noise will be created by heavy machinery during construction. In order to mitigate these issues, Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction. BMPs include dust control and work hours will be limited from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM to eliminate excess disturbance to area residents. Correspondence with the Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation revealed the District will have to pay $139.62 to the Stewardship Account since the project is located in the General Habitat of the Sage Grouse. Finally, the AC water main will be either abandoned in place or bagged and disposed of properly as required by DEQ.

V. IS AN EA OR EIS REQUIRED?

After considering several items, it has been determined that this project is not a candidate for a Categorical Exclusion and this project is instead a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), so this Environmental Assessment is required. There is a need for this Environmental Assessment due to

the fact that this project is not just a minor upgrade, as it is more than just a minor expansion of system capacity. However, the project will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment, so it will not require an Environmental Impact Statement. An Environmental Checklist was completed as part of the initial PER and is included in Appendix A of the 2020 PER and all environmental issues were addressed in that document.

VI. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A formal public hearing was held on July 22, 2020 to further gather public input on the proposed improvements. At the public hearing, the improvements will be explained including the purpose and proposed area of the project, activities, budget, possible sources of funding, environmental assessment process, and any costs that may result for local citizens because of the project.

VII. PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR PREPARING

This EA was prepared by Eugenia Barry, PE of Great West Engineering, Inc.

VIII. OTHER AGENCIES

Agencies contacted for input on this Environmental Assessment and their responses can be found in Appendix A of the 2020 Water System Improvements PER, but include agencies such as the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Montana Sage Grouse Program, and the National Park Service.

EA Approved By:

Greg Lukasik, P.E. — Date: 7-14-2020

For the St. Marie – North Valley County Water and Sewer District:

Nick Chiechi, District President — Date: 7-14-20